Price Twopence 3s. per annum post free

The Non-Subscribing Presbyterian

No. 303. DECEMBER, 1931.

FATHER. MOTHER. CHILD.

Glory to God in the highest.

CONTENTS;

Notes and News	Front Page	Reviews	137
Ministers' Conference ...	135	Peace	137
Irish Hospitality	135	Reports	138
Congregationalists and A.G.	136	Ulster Hall United Service	140

NOTES AND NEWS.

Father—Mother—Child made up the old Egyptian Trinity. The family is the unit of the State. Holy families, holy state! Christmas is above all the children's time. Brightness coming in the midst of the dark days should, for a brief season, lift us up out of the shadow of care into the sunshine of happiness. May every family into which this Magazine enters, have a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

* * *

A young man in "low water" was asked by a Salvation Army lassie to put something into a box. "I have only got a dollar," he replied. "All right," she replied, "tithe it!" He gave her a tenth of it, and from that moment his luck turned, and he made a point of putting aside for good work, a tenth of his earnings, and later on a bigger proportion, for he prospered. A halfpenny, a penny or twopence every day, put into a box and saved up makes a little fund to draw upon for contributions for your Church and its activities. It is easier to give in that way, and you can choose what you will give to. Don't forget "The Non-Subscribing Presbyterian," and no matter how small the amount, it is always welcome for the Subsidy Fund. Take the Magazine yourself and read it, then hand it to your next-door neighbour, and thus do something for your Church. That's the way to attract the blessing.

* * *

The Winter Session, with its activities, is now going apace. First House, Belfast, has a very full programme for the winter. A prominent feature of the Church's winter work for many years has been the series of special Sunday evening sermons by the Minister, designed to meet the needs of the more thoughtful portion of the community. The Rev. R. Nicol Cross has continued this practice now, and at the Sunday evening worship throughout November has been expounding the teaching of some eminent modern thinkers like Dean Inge, Sir James Jeans, Sir Oliver Lodge and Julian Huxley's "Religion Without Revelation," on December 6th, while on Sunday night, 13th December, the Organist and Augmented Choir will give their annual rendering of Handel's "Messiah," and on the 20th render a number of Christmas Carols, ancient and modern. It may be said that while the First Church offers no meat or drink for the body, its ministry sets before itself the weal of providing food for thought, as well as medicine for the soul, for those to whom it is necessary, in Tennyson's words—

> "That mind and soul according well
> Should make one music."

In the public Press Mr. Nicol Cross has been defending the Government, and the position of the Primate of Ireland, in the policy of declining to give the Protestant Churches, as such, special representation on the Committee of Management of Stranmillis Training College for Teachers, which controls appointment of staff, curriculum, etc., though conceding such representation in an advisory capacity in regard to the religious and moral side of the College, and that in addition to the three denominational chaplains on the staff of the College.

The Unitarian and Free Christian Laymen's League has arranged for a fine series of addresses. Dr. R. R. Hunter's lecture on November 19th was on the subject of "Was Darwin Right?" A critical study of the story of Adam and Eve in the light of modern science, illustrated by lantern slides.

* * *

As will be seen from the Reports, All-Souls' had its Annual Sale of Work on November 20th, opened at 3 p.m. by Miss Hutton. The Anniversary Sermon was preached on Sunday, 22nd November, by Rev. Herbert Barnes.

* * *

As we go to Press on the 20th, the report of Ulster Hall United Service must be postponed until next month.

* * *

The Rev. E. H. Pickering, M.A., minister of All Souls, 1912-21, Professor of English at Yamagata Koto Gakko, Japan, from 1927, has been elected M.P. (Lib. Nat.) for Leicester West.

* * *

According to the late Rev. Alex. Gordon, Theophilus Lindsey got the term Unitarian from the writers at the end of the 17th century, who introduced it into the English language. It was introduced at that time as a term of Catholic spirit and wide comprehensiveness. Sabellians, Arians, Socinians were all equally entitled to the name. "Sabellianism" is generally applied to accepting "person" in the Trinity, as meaning "manifestation."

A THEOLOGICAL ARGUMENT.

I do not know who it was who made the discovery that it is much more effective in an argument to tax a man with the sins which he avoids rather than those which he commits. When we accuse the Negro of having curly hair, he has probably some good explanation to offer for it. He has noticed the fact himself and thought about the reason of it. On the other hand, when we denounce him for having such a blindingly white skin, the wretch is struck dumb. He has never thought of any argument in favour of having a white skin.

I am sure that most members of the Non-Subscribing Presbyterian Church have, like myself, noticed the prevalence of this type of argument in present-day religious controversy. Because I believe in so much, I am told that I believe in nothing. When I say that I believe God to be the Universal Father, I am told that my refusal to acknowledge Him as the Father of Jesus places me beyond the hope of redemption. The amazing miracle of the universe, with its complex pieces working ever in harmony, so that the electrons in the atom and the planets of the solar system alike follow with unerring accuracy their proper courses, fills me with such wonder that it seems to me a very minor matter whether or not the universal laws were once suspended for a couple of hours. Yet because I am so intent on the greater miracle that I am unconcerned about the lesser, I am represented as not believing in the miracles at all. It is as if it were necessary to admire the police force, not because they always enforce the laws impartially, but solely for one or two instances when they have not enforced those laws. Because great things are rare, there is a tendency to believe, with the national and even international instinct to put the cart before the horse, that rare things are great. In the same manner, since a murderer is equally rare with a successful politician, we give each an equal amount of space in our newspapers. I am told that I am accursed because I do not believe that Christ died to save men, while all the time I am earnestly affirming that He did by His Life and Death open a clear way to our salvation. I will not, I admit, be blinded by the splendour of His Death to the splendour of His Life. Some of our Orthodox friends seem to think that it is only the final hours of His life we have to be thankful and grateful for. The years which went before—the wonderful period when the world was shown what our human nature might rise to—these seem to be treated as without interest by certain sects.

One might ask: "How is such a type of argument to be met?" I think the answer is that it is best met by avoiding it. I know that this sounds as like a

paradox as the grounds for the argument itself. Yet I think that on consideration it will be found that those who argue thus are determined not to be convinced by any reply we may make. Let us then reply by keeping silent, and continuing to believe, in spite of all the unbelief of the "True believers."

MINISTERS' CONFERENCE.

The Ministers' Conference for November was held at the house of Mr. and Mrs. Alf. Hoy, Cherryvalley Park, Knock, Rev. J. Barron being the ministerial host. There was a good attendance. A motor accident on the way up, in which two of our ministers were involved, fortunately without personal injury to either, prevented one of the ministers from being present. The Rev. J. A. Kelly gave an interesting paper on "A Dip Into the Past." Mr. Kelly, from his own personal recollections, was able to give a good deal of information, which threw new light on incidents connected with the denomination in Ireland during the last sixty years. Mr. Kelly's early life was spent in the neighbourhood of Saul, near Down-Patrick, where the influence of St. Patrick is so strongly felt, and where in Mr. Kelly's younger days very cordial relations existed between Catholics and Protestants. The parish priest, who was friendly with everybody, however. ultimately received orders from his superiors not to continue to fraternise as he had been doing, with Protestants, and, unfortunately, there was no choice for him but to obey; but "his riverence," though no longer allowed to go to the houses of his Protestant friends, invited them to come to his house. However, from that time on things were never quite as they had been, and it was the case, more or less, throughout the whole country, and a Protestant boy passing a Catholic school had to run for it, and vice versa. Very interesting descriptions were given of the old Ministers, who in those days were staunchly Presbyterian, and were deeply affected by developments which seemed to lead away from the old standards. Mr. Kelly also made some very interesting remarks about his own ministry at Rademon and at Dunmurry. Perhaps it may be possible at some future time to have the various items arranged in an article. The meeting was a very enjoyable and harmonious one.

IRISH HOSPITALITY.

"The Christian Register" (Boston, U.S.A., 1/10/'31), has an article with the above title, by Dr. Edwin Fairley. Those who met Rev. Arthur L. Agnew when he was in this country at the May meetings this year, may be interested in this account of a visit to the parish of this energetic and dynamic young clergyman.

We arrived in Belfast, Mrs. Fairley, Bill and I, at eleven o'clock of an August evening, and Irish hospitality began to function at once. Mr. Agnew and Mr. Hart, the Secretary of the Church, met us at the station with Mr. Agnew's car, and took us bag and baggage to a hotel, where we dropped the bags and drove on to the Church. Nearly a dozen people were gathered to greet us, and we had tea, which means in Ireland sandwiches and cakes and jam. Next day (Thursday) Mr. Agnew called for us in the morning and drove us to the Unitarian Headquarters in Belfast, where he met the Secretary, and to the building of the First Presbyterian Church, of which Rev. R. Nicol Cross is the minister. This is a fine, old-fashioned Church, over a hundred years old, bearing everywhere the marks of quiet respectability. The minister was away on his vacation, but the Church was kept open with supplies in his absence. Then we drove south through a pleasant part of the city, giving us glimpses of Queen's University, Mr. Agnew's alma mater, and of the Presbyterian Theological Seminary to the beautiful country beyond. Our destination was the Giant's Ring, a stupendous earthwork, dating back to pre-historic times. On our way back we visited the Elmwood Church, a fine structure, well equipped. Next day visits were paid to City Hall. Bellevue, and Bill and I spent the afternoon on Mr. Agnew's motor boat, which had been hauled out for repairs, in which Mr. Agnew and several parishioners

were busily engaged. In the evening another gathering in the Church. Friday was a great day. Mr. Agnew took us to Raloo, Co. Antrim, to the Manse of Rev. and Mrs. J. M'Cleery, where their son, John M'Cleery, a student of Manchester College, Oxford, joined us, and we went along the Antrim Coast Road to Cushendall, and thence across the Moors to the Giant's Causeway. Few roads in the world can compare with this. Across the water we can see Ailsa Craig and the loom of the Scottish Mountains. I shall not attempt to describe the Giant's Causeway, but only say that it left us with an impression of sublime grandeur. But the day did not end there. On our way home we stopped again at the Manse in Raloo and found that Mrs. M'Cleery had prepared a delicious supper for us. The evening by this time was cold and rainy, and we shall not soon forget the bright warmth of the Manse fire, and the still brighter warmth of the M'Cleery's hospitality. Mr. M'Cleery has been in Raloo for thirty years and has had a fruitful and gracious ministry, which seems good for many years more. He has the love and respect not only of his parishioners, but also of his brethren in the ministry. On Saturday morning we were told to come to the Church, and there we met about one hundred people, listened to some good singing and saw some esthetic dancing of Irish jigs, and were then invited to the platform, where Mrs. Fairley was given some Belfast linen and the men received Irish blackthorn canes Mutual goodwill speeches followed, and then refreshments brought to an end a delightful evening. York Street has the friendly custom of giving up its own morning service on certain Sundays of the summer and going en masse to visit a country Church. This Sunday we all drove to Clough, of which Rev. J. Shaw Brown is minister. At 3.30 o'clock we drove back to Belfast. At the evening service there was a congregation of two hundred and fifty. One of the hymns was "Forward, Shoulder to Shoulder." Mr. Agnew is greatly beloved by his congregation, and, judging by the notices he gave out, keeps a varied programme going. Again the American was the preacher. After the service our boat was leaving for England, but before we went we must adjourn to the lower hall for tea. I was for calling a taxi to take us to the dock, but Mr. Agnew assured us that it was considered a disgrace for anyone to leave York Street in a taxi. So our bags were carried to the boat by our kind Irish friends, and sixty of them went with us and stayed on the dock waving their handkerchiefs and hats until the boat started, and we Americans were borne away with our hearts glowing with appreciation of the warmth of Irish hospitality.

CONGREGATIONALISTS AND A.C.

The Congregational Historical Society's "Transactions" for September opened with a tribute to Alexander Gordon. "By the passing away of the Rev. Alexander Gordon on 21st February ,1931, our Society has lost one who, though not of our denomination, was one of our oldest members, staunchest friends, and most distinguished ornaments. Mr. Gordon was born in 1841, and could trace his descent through six generations in one of the students of Richard Frankland (founder of the first Nonconformist Academy). He had a hand in establishing the Theological Faculty in Manchester University, and was University Lecturer in Ecclesiastical History, 1904-11. His learning was prodigious and his industry marvellous. Prof. Tout declared that he knew no man who had the same majestical sweep over the centuries of ecclesiastical history. In the realm of Non-Conformist history he certainly had no peer. . . . . Gordon was a great traveller and a great frequenter of libraries. His later days were spent between his home in Belfast and the British Museum, and if he happened to be in London at the time he never failed to come to the annual meeting of our Society and to contribute to the discussion. His heart was as large as his mind, his sympathies were universal."

A. J. GRIEVE.

Published on the last Saturday of the month. Copy for the printer should be sent before the 15th at the latest.

REVIEWS.

"Religious Experience" — J. C. Flower, M.A., Ph.D.

"Progress and Christianity" — Raymond V. Holt, M.A., B.Litt (Oxon.)

"The Revelation of God in Nature and Humanity"—Basil Viney.

"Psychical Research and Religion"—Leslie J. Belton, B.A. (Liverpool), M.Sc. (Birmingham).

The Lindsey Press. One Shilling Net.

Here are four new manuals just out, attractively got up in red paper covers and well written, intended to make their appeal to the more thoughtful section of the community. In each of them there is a very great deal of meat in the egg, and as much information is concentrated in any one of them as otherwise would have to be gleaned from a very wide course of reading, and that in itself would be a recommendation to those who find that their time for reading is very limited. They comprise a twentieth century appeal on behalf of our liberal faith; so much of our propaganda literature is of the nineteenth century, excellent enough in its own way, and still having its work to perform, especially among those of the "Bible Standards" type. A shilling invested in the purchase of any one of these four books will be spent to good purpose.

J. B.

* * *

"The Story of Unitarianism"—Raymond V. Holt, B.A., B.Litt. (Oxon)—Lindsey Press—Price 2d.

This is one of the most effective pamphlets that we have seen for some time, and in small compass gives a wonderful amount of valuable information, especially so to the English congregations who have inherited the old Meeting-Houses. Mr. Holt says: "The essence of the Christian revelation is that God and man share the same nature." He traces the "adventure" through each of the cenuries from the Sixteenth. Mr. Holt says that about 150 of the old Dissenting Churches in England and Wales, descendants from congregations dating from the ejections at the Restoration of Monarchy, when Richard Baxter (1625-1691), became Unitarian. We know of several who have held out against having the name 'Unitarian' attached to their buildings, and who would prefer the title of "Free Christian" or "Liberal Christian." "Free Christian," as a partner in the firm, seems to be ignored.

PEACE.

In an address on November 12th, to the Liverpool Rotary Club, Brigadier-General F. P. Crozier, who is well-known in Ulster, stated: "There is a syndicate in Britain at the present time, with ramifications in other countries on the Continent, who are building on the certainty of another war in the next twenty years, but we have to stop them. We are living, and are content to live, in a wonderful state of lies in regard to disarmament, and the British public seems to like it and gulps it down." The General Assembly in England, with which our Church in Ireland is affiliated, has sent a letter from its President to the various congregations calling attention to the subject of disarmament, in connection with which a World Conference will meet in February, 1932. "At this crisis the Churches must be true to the religion they profess. The Conference must not be allowed to fail, for failure may lead to consequences, the seriousness of which it is impossible to estimate." This would, we are sure, have the endorsement of our Moderator.

MUSEUM AND ART GALLERY.

The attention of our members is invited to the excellent series of public lectures on Wednesdays at 8 p.m., admission free, by ticket to be obtained at the Museum or the Central Library, Royal Avenue.

For December 2nd, "Ideal Education," by Prof. W. J. M'Callister, M.A., B.Sc.

December 9th, "Beginning of Civilisation," Mr. E. E. Evans, M.A., F.S.A.

December 16th, "Recital of Poetry With Original Music and Original Poems," by Mr. Hamilton Reany, L.G.S.M. (Eloc.).

There are very interesting cultural

film courses for children at 10.20 a.m. and 3.30 p.m. Nature Study, Industry, Literature, Life in other Lands. Children under 12 require to be accompanied by adults.

In addition to these courses at the Museum, Belfast is now noted for its advance in recent years as a musical centre. The Orchestral Concerts in connection with the B.B.C. ought to be mentioned. There is one announced in the Ulster Hall, on Saturday, December 5th. Unreserved seats 6d; reserved 1/3.

REPORTS.

Downpatrick. — On Armistice Day, November 11th, a united service was held in the N.S. Presbyterian Church. The number present was estimated at 540. A procession, headed by the Craig Flute Band, in which the members of the British Legion, Boys' Brigade, and Girl Guides took part, marched to the Meeting-House. At the base of the mural tablet wreaths were laid by Mr. Hugh Dickson, J.P., on behalf of the congregation; Mr. J. Newman, in memory of his nephew, and one from Miss Norah Nelson in memory of her brother. Lord Bangor read the first lesson. With Miss Dickson at the organ, the hymns, led by an augmented choir, were: "For All the Saints," "Nearer My God to Thee," "God of Our Fathers," "Lord, While for all Mankind We Pray." In the course of an eloquent sermon, Rev. J. M'Neil said that victory and defeat had long been merged in a common need. We prayed that war might be abolished. We ought to cultivate thoughts and feelings of peace by far the best method of destroying the roots of the evil. The collection on behalf of the Haig Fund was taken up by Lord Bangor, Dr. Robb, Captains Sloan and Morton, and Messrs. R. D. Chambers, H. Dickson, C. Savage, C. Stewart, and H. Torney. The National Anthem closed an impressive service.

Belfast First Church.—A Congregational Social was held in the Central Hall on October 21st to inaugurate our winter activities in a spirit of fellowship and good cheer. In every way it proved a most successful function. After an excellent tea, which did credit to the Social Evenings' Committee under Mrs. Boyd, who has established her reputation as the catering expert in connection with such occasions, and also to the good friends who sent cakes rolling in, equal in quality to the tea itself. A Guessing Competition was engaged in, for which Mr. W. H. M'Cafferty had made all the preparations. The Competition warmed the atmosphere to friendly heat, and promoted healthy circulation among the large number of people present, putting them into a good mood for the musical programme provided by Mr. Albert Taylor and his Female Voice Choir from Larne, to which Mrs. Taylor acted as accomplished pianist. At the close, the Rev. R. Nicol Cross, who presided, presented Mr. R. Wilkinson with a fountain pen, and Miss Roleston with a box of chocolates as the prize-winners. A vote of thanks to all who contributed to one of the most enjoyable and well attended socials at the First Church was proposed in happy terms by Mr. R. M'Crum, and likewise seconded by Mr. R. M. Laird. The proceedings closed with the Benediction, pronounced by the Minister.

Belfast: First Church.—On November 3rd, in aid of the charitable work of the Women's League, the Rosemary Dramatic Club presented "Scenes from the Merchant of Venice," by Shakespeare, and "The Will," by Sir James Baine, at the Central Hall. The Club is progressing in its dramatic work, and gave a better show than in the same pieces last winter. In the scenes from the Merchant of Venice the Court Scene was best of all, with Miss Browne as Portia; R. Harkness as Shylock; A. M'Neill as Antonio, and Miss Eileen M'Cafferty as Bassanio. The greatest improvement, however, was observed in "The Will." Various characters did well, and especially A. M'Neil as Mr. Devizes, the solicitor. In some cases there was still need of development of voice and enunciation, but that will come in time with experience of the stage. Considerable credit is due to all in connection with the production, and not least to Mr. Andrew M'Neill and Mr. R. Harkness. The Club now proposes to rehearse a dramatic version of scenes from Dickens's "David Copperfield."

Ballycarry. — Harvest Thanksgiving Services were held in the Old Presbyterian Church, Ballycarry, on October 18th. The Minister occupied the pulpit in the morning. At the Evening Service the Rev. A. L. Agnew, B.A., was the preacher of an eloquent sermon, which was greatly appreciated by a crowded congregation, the Church being filled to overflowing. The choir rendered the anthem "Great is the Lord," which was beautifully sung. Miss Anderson was the organist at both services. The good gifts of the season of Harvest were plentifully displayed throughout the Church.

Ballyclare Women's League. — A Whist Drive was held on the 2nd Oct., and a Sale of Work on the 10th. The Sale was opened by Miss M'Kelvey (Glastry House, Kircubbin), who in a few gracious words expressed her pleasure in being with us, and her sympathy with the cause. Both of these functions were held to help clear the debt on the Manse.

Miss M'Kelvey spoke of the quiet, helpful influence of our Minister, how worthy he was of the effort we were making. This was endorsed by all present, for Mr. Bell is deservedly respected by the entire community.

Mr. Miniss (Larne) presided, and in a racy, typical speech apologised for being in the chair, but he only succeeded in making us realise how fortunate we were in having him. To Miss M'Kelvey and to Mr. Miniss we owe much gratitude.

Mr. Bell and Mr. Forsythe proposed votes of thanks to Miss M'Kelvey and to the Chairman, respectively, Miss Harson and Miss Hogarth seconding their proposals. A feature of the Sale was a "Variety Stall" staffed by the young folks. At the end of the evening they had not a single article left from their well-filled stall. Their enthusiasm and bright hopefulness should be fostered and encouraged. The Work, Refreshment and Book Stalls were well patronised. Mrs. Moore was responsible for the half-hour concerts and that the artistes were all her own pupils speaks eloquently for both.

Work for the Sale was originally confined to members of the League. Eventually members of the congregation (not represented in the League) were asked to help. They did so with an enthusiasm and a generosity that made us all feel we were glad to be "members one of another."

To those good friends from the Churches in our own body who loyally and generously helped us, we take this opportunity of expressing our gratitude, and to those other friends who, while not worshipping with us, always help us, we are no less grateful.

To the young men of the congregation, who willingly and cheerfully did the "spade work" for us we tender our sincere thanks, for their's was no light task.

Crumlin's Harvest Services were quite as successful as previously. Sunday, October 11th, the Minister preached, and on Monday the Rev. A. M. Bell, Ballyclare, took the service. The Church was nicely decorated by the usual band of helpers, to whose numbers we should like to see fresh additions. The York Street Choir came out on Monday night and sang two anthems, a male voice quartette, and a vesper. Their singing was thoroughly appreciated and enjoyed by everybody. Afterwards the congregation served tea in the Schoolroom to visitors, and a very jolly party it was. We look upon our special services as a valuable form of home missionary work, and always we are gladdened for weeks after by hearing of some visitor or other (who probably had never been inside the Church before) being surprised at the simple beauty of our Meeting-House.

We are pleased to announce that Mrs. Douglas H. Clarke (nee Sloan) recently gave birth to a son, and the congregation offer them all good wishes.

The Minister baptised the six weeks' old son of Mr. and Mrs. D. H. Clarke, on Sunday, 15th November, at the parents' home, into the name of Michael William Hughes.

All Souls', Belfast. — Unitarian and Free Christian Women's League. — At the Sale of Work on Friday, November 20th, the opener was Miss Hutton, "The Farm," Belfast, and the Chairman, David Munn, Esq., J.P., Comber. Mrs. Love was president of the League Stall; Miss Carmichael, of the Fancy Work

Stall; and Mrs. Whitehouse, of the Sunday School Stall — refreshments, cakes, sweets, flowers, and fruit. There were in addition: Recitations, music, Irish folk-dancing by the Social Service Girls' Club. The Anniversary was held on Sunday morning, November 22nd, Rev. Herbert Barnes, of Newcastle-on-Tyne being the preacher.

Ballyclare. — Harvest Thanksgiving Services were held in this Church on Sunday and Monday, 25th and 26th October. The Minister (Rev. A. M. Bell) occupied the pulpit on Sunday morning, Rev. Thos. Munn (Cairncastle) in the evening, and on Monday evening Rev. P. Goddig (Banbridge). Large congregations at all services were encouraging. On Sunday evening many could not find seating accommodation. The Church looked beautiful in the freshness of the morning, the sun enhancing the glory of the flowers, fruit, and grain. On Sunday and Monday evenings the artistic grouping of the flowers showed up well in the artificial light. The music, as usual, was of a high order. The soloists at the morning service were Miss Douther and Mr. Harson. On Sunday evening Mrs. Moore and Miss Gardiner, Miss Douther and Miss Easton, Mr. Sander Johnston (Muckamore), Mr. John Harson. On Monday evening the choir was entirely composed of children. Two tiny members (Miss Lily Moore and Miss Marie Kerr) sang a duet. Miss Lauretta Kerr and Master Jack MacMillan were the soloists.

Raloo. — Harvest Thanksgiving Services were held on Sunday, 25th Oct. The Rev J. M'Neil, Downpatrick, conducted the services, and his sermons were much appreciated. The hearty singing of the harvest hymns by an augmented choir, in which the Sunday School boys took a prominent part, was greatly enjoyed. Vocal solos by Miss Etta M'Gooken, and flute solos by Master Samuel Bradford, a member of the Sunday School and Choir, added to the success of the day's proceedings. The Church was tastefully decorated, and there was large congregations.

ULSTER HALL UNITED SERVICE.

At the Ulster Hall United Service held on the 22nd November, the preacher was the Rev. Herbert Barnes, of the Church of the Divine Unity, Newcastle-on-Tyne. Taking as his subject "Religion as a Human Need," he made a plea for a conception of religion based on the moral and spiritual nature of man himself. He said he had the feeling that such a conception of religion would resolve many perplexities in matters of faith and set at rest many religious controversies—if men would persistently look on religion not as a theology, but a need—not as a science, but a want. There was such a thing as the science of religion, but religion itself was not a science. It was a need of the human soul. It was founded in the yearnings and questings of the mind and spirit of man. Men were religious beings, because they had religious natures.

There were speculations about God and man, faith and prayers, and immortality. Men thought about these things and came to their different conclusions. These various conclusions constituted their theologies and creeds. These theologies and creeds were not religion. Humanity was religious before there were any theologies or creeds or churches. It was religion that made churches, not churches religion.

They were living in an age when religion had to be presented in this simple but fundamental way—that religion is a human need and as such is a great necessity. It would be as easy to find a people without any sense of moral life as to find a people without a sense of divinity. That is a view of religion disentangled from all its accidentals and non-essentials. Religion itself under-pinned and over-arched all human expressions of it. It is concerned with the great primary instincts and impulses of our human nature. It is concerned with fundamental facts of life and the world.

That was the conception of religion that had to be preached to this generation. "This is a generation," said Mr. Barnes, "that has revolted from external authority in religion. It is

not without reason that many peoples to-day are in revolt. Religious authority has taken an unfair advantage over them. It has tried to impose its formulated beliefs — and that is not the Church's true authority. The Church will find her true authority in this—in telling men about the divinity within them and preaching religion as a human need. Perhaps the revolt is really a very healthy thing! It is so if it represents the feeling that the science of religion does not satisfy the needs of the human spirit. The soul that cries for the Living God wants something better than a theology about God. The religious need is not met by the intellectual formalities of religion."

"This is a day of new opportunity for our free and undogmatic churches," he concluded. "Theology has failed. Religion as spiritual adventure had not failed. So long as man was constituted as he is religion would continue to endure. It is only a free religion of the spirit that can answer the new day. The church of the future can only be a church of the spirit."

ROYWOOD HALL CONCERT.

This hall, newly fitted with electric light, was filled to capacity on Tuesday evening, October 27, for the concert arranged by Mrs. Axon on behalf of the funds of "The Old Meeting-House," Cairncastle. A first-class programme was provided and all the numbers were well received. Mr. and Mrs. R. W. Woods, of Belfast, were responsible for a large part of the programme and their songs and duets were outstanding features in the concert. Miss Hall and Miss Laird showed exceptional dramatic talent in their recitations, while the Misses M'Guighen received well-merited applause in their dance numbers. The Misses Ferris and Graham, in duet and solo, were accomplished artistes. Miss Perry not only gave pleasure with her songs, but also rendered service at the piano; while Mr. Mercer's rich baritone voice was heard to advantage in the songs he sang. Those responsible for the concert were able to secure the services of Miss Victoria Gordon, so well known in Ulster as one of our talented singers, and the audience in Roywood Hall showed their appreciation by their prolonged applause. Mr. Tom Reynolds, as the humourist, had a great reception, and by his songs and patter kept the audience rocking with laughter. A long programme but, like Oliver Twist, at the last the large assembly were still asking for more.

Thanks were accorded to Mrs. Axon and Mr. Woods for the good entertainment they had provided, and to the other artists for their talented contributions to the programme. Mr. Woods presided at the piano. The singing of "God Save the King" brought to a close an interesting and enjoyable concert. A dance was held afterwards for those young in years or young in heart. The Sonora Band, Larne, provided the music. Proceeds amounted to £16.

MOUNTPOTTINGER WOMEN'S LEAGUE.

The eighth session opened on September 9th with a Devotional Service in the Church, conducted by Mrs. J. H. Ewbank. In her address she referred to the cares and anxieties of members of families for each other, and thought it would be well for us to try sometimes and exercise the same devotion to one another in the Church by expressing our sympathy and helping those in need. Miss Ashworth, A.L.C.M., presided at the organ. After service, the members met in the Schoolroom for the annual meeting. The report of work done during the year was presented to the meeting, also the financial statement. Both were considered most satisfactory. All officers and committee were re-elected. Our President, Mrs. Ewbank, by her own special efforts has encouraged her band of workers to give of their best to their Church. We have entered upon the new session with rather heavy responsibilities, but with a determination to reduce same as much as possible by having another Sale of Work and Cake Fair, to be held on 11th December.

Our second monthly meeting of the session was held on October 26th, when we had the pleasure of listening to a Talk by Mrs. Byrne, who made us all

feel we were having a tour round Dublin, visiting most interesting places, and, in closing, she related the wonderful information she had obtained regarding the preparations for the Eucharistic Convention to be held there next summer. The members were delighted with Mrs. Byrne's description of her recent experiences in Dublin.

On Harvest Festival Sunday, the Women's League and Choir members entertained to tea the ladies and gentlemen who assisted with the musical portion of the Service, also a few of the congregation and friends who were free to stay. The gathering, which included Rev. G. J. Slipper, Rev. S. Whitehouse, and Rev. J. H. Ewbank, was a very happy one.

On November 16th the third monthly meeting was held, when Miss Armstrong (Vice-President of the District League) gave us a most entertaining and instructive talk on her experiences in a French Convent, at which she stayed for two months. The description of the places and the picturesque costumes was so lucidly given that it was quite easy to imagine we were in the places and seeing the people referred to. Miss Armstrong very kindly brought with her some delightful sketches she had made of the Convent and its beautiful garden. Mrs. Ewbank presided, and expressed the appreciation of Miss Armstrong's kindness in coming and giving us such an enjoyable evening.

It is interesting to note that while we had a minister of the Northern Churches at our united gathering, one of our own Ministers, Rev. A. L. Agnew, B.A., was the preacher at the Annual Meeting of the York Street Unitarian Churches in Bradford on Sunday, 31st October.

Mr. Agnew preached at Mill Hill, Leeds, on Sunday, 1st November, and also addressed the Council of the General Synod on his American visit, and spoke at the Public Meeting on "Our Opportunity."

LEAGUE HOUSE, 18 DEVEREUX COURT, STRAND, LONDON, W.C.2.

Open to members of the Women's League, and Women and Girls belonging to our Congregations.

BED, BATH, AND BREAKFAST, 5/-.

APPLY, giving a few day's notice to: **MISS HERMANN, The Warden.**

DEATHS.

FRIPP—On November 9th, 1931, at Colchester, Rev. Edgar Innes Fripp, late minister of All Souls, Belfast, in his 70th year.

CORRY—At the Sexton's Cottage, Ballyhemlin, Wednesday, Nov. 8th, Marian, aged 8 months.

CRAWFORD—October 28th, 1931, at Raloo, John Gordon Crawford, aged 82 years. Interred in the Old Graveyard on Friday, 30th October.

— The Unitarian and —
Free Christian Laymen's League.

—:o:—

BELFAST CHAPTER

meets in the CENTRAL HALL, ROSEMARY STREET, at 8 p m., Third Thursday of the month, October to May, inclusive.

OBJECTS (inter alia).

To encourage laymen to take a more active part in the work of the Churches.

To form a bond of union and closer co-operation between the members of the various congregations.

The Committee invite those who are not already members to join. The minimum subscription is 2/6, and further particulars may be obtained from—

MR. J. H. GILLILAND,
35 Rosemary St., Belfast, Hon. Sec.
MR. J. EDMONDSON, Jr., Asst. Hon, Sec
19 Linen Street, Belfast

R. W. MOFFETT & CO.
House and Church Decorators, and General Contractors.
ESTIMATES FREE.
11, BOWNESS ST. & McCANDLESS ST., BELFAST.

THE
TEACHERS' HANDBOOKS
OF
GRADED RELIGIOUS EDUCATION
(Prepared by the Religious Education Department of the General Assembly)
ARE
NOW ON SALE
And can be obtained from
The Ulster Unitarian Christian Association Depository,
35 ROSEMARY STREET, BELFAST.
Price 7/- ost, 1/2.